

Application No. 09/833,123
Attorney Docket No. 20852-0003

C.) AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the Application.

1. (currently amended) A method for allocating demand for delivery services associated with computer network based customer orders, said method comprising the steps of:
receiving a customer order over a computer network, the customer order including a time period selected from a plurality of time periods for delivery of the customer order;
monitoring demand associated with a for deliveries of customer orders in each time period of the plurality of time periods;
determining at least one time period of the plurality of time periods having a lower level of demand than other time periods of the plurality of time periods;
offering an incentive to customers placing an order over the computer network and selecting the determined at least one time period during a particular one of the plurality of time periods, wherein the particular one of the plurality of time periods is associated with a low level of demand; and
withdrawing the offered incentive in response responsive to receipt of a predetermined number of deliveries during the particular one of the plurality of time periods customer orders selecting the determined at least one time period exceeding a predetermined threshold.

2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the incentive is a price discount.

3. (currently amended) A method for allocating demand for delivery services associated with computer network based customer orders, said method comprising the steps of:
receiving a customer order over a computer network, the customer order including a time period selected from a plurality of time periods for delivery of the customer order;
monitoring demand associated with a for deliveries of customer orders in each time period of the plurality of time periods;

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determining at least one time period of the plurality of time periods having a greater level of demand than other time periods of the plurality of time periods;

imposing a surcharge to customers placing an order over the computer network and selecting the determined at least one time period during a particular one of the plurality of time periods, wherein the particular one of the plurality of time periods is associated with a high level of demand; and

withdrawing the imposed surcharge in response responsive to receipt of a predetermined number of customer orders selecting the determined at least one time period being less than a predetermined threshold number of deliveries during the particular one of the plurality of time periods.

4. (currently amended) An article of manufacture comprising A computer program product embodied on a computer readable medium and executable by a microprocessor for allocating demand for delivery services associated with computer network based customer orders, said article of manufacture storing computer program product comprising a plurality of executable instructions, wherein the plurality of executable instructions comprise means for executing the steps of:

receiving a customer order over a computer network, the customer order including a time period selected from a plurality of time periods for delivery of the customer order;

monitoring demand associated with a for deliveries of customer orders in each time period of the plurality of time periods;

determining at least one time period of the plurality of time periods having a lower level of demand than other time periods of the plurality of time periods;

offering an incentive to customers placing an order over the computer network and selecting the determined at least one time period during a particular one of the plurality of time periods, wherein the particular one of the plurality of time periods is associated with a low level of demand; and

withdrawing the offered incentive in response responsive to receipt of a predetermined number of deliveries during the particular one of the plurality of time periods customer orders

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selecting the determined at least one time period exceeding a predetermined threshold.

5. (original) The article of manufacture of claim 4, wherein the incentive is a price discount.

6. (currently amended) A system for allocating demand for delivery services associated with sales orders, said system comprising:

at least one client computer, the at least one client computer including a browser configured to display information on goods and operable to submit sales orders for goods from customers, the sales order including a time period selected from a plurality of time periods for delivery of the sales order;

a server computer connected to the at least one client computer by a computer network, the server computer being configured to receive sales orders from the at least one client computer for receiving orders for a plurality of time periods, wherein the server computer comprising is operable to:

a microprocessor;

computer instructions executable by the microprocessor for monitoring demand associated with a for deliveries of sales orders in each time period of the plurality of time periods;

computer instructions executable by the microprocessor for determining at least one time period of the plurality of time periods having a greater level of demand than other time periods of the plurality of time periods;

computer instructions executable by the microprocessor for displaying a surcharge on the browser and imposing a the surcharge to customers placing an order selecting the determined at least one time period during a particular one of the plurality of time periods, wherein the particular one of the plurality of time periods is associated with a high level of demand; and

computer instructions executable by the microprocessor for removing the surcharge displayed by the browser and withdrawing the imposed surcharge in response responsive to receipt of less than a predetermined number of sales orders selecting the determined at least one

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time period being less than a predetermined threshold number of deliveries during the particular one of the plurality of time periods.

7. (new) The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

determining at least one second time period of the plurality of time periods having a higher level of demand than other time periods of the plurality of time periods;

imposing a surcharge to customers placing an order over the computer network and selecting the determined at least one second time period of the plurality of time periods; and

withdrawing the imposed surcharge in response to receipt of a predetermined number of customer orders selecting the determined at least second one time period being less than a second predetermined threshold.

8. (new) The method of claim 7 wherein the imposed surcharge is a price increase.

9. (new) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of monitoring demand for deliveries of customer orders includes calculating a number of customer orders for each time period of the plurality of time periods.

10. (new) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of determining a geographic customer area for a customer based on a delivery address associated with a customer order.

11. (new) The method of claim 3 wherein the imposed surcharge is a price increase.

12. (new) The method of claim 3 further comprising the steps of:

determining at least one second time period of the plurality of time periods having a lower level of demand than other time periods of the plurality of time periods;

offering an incentive to customers placing an order over the computer network and selecting the determined at least one second time period of the plurality of time periods; and

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withdrawing the offered incentive in response to receipt of a predetermined number of customer orders selecting the determined at least one time period exceeding a predetermined threshold.

13. (new) The method of claim 12 wherein the offered incentive is a price discount.

14. (new) The method of claim 3 wherein the step of monitoring demand for deliveries of customer orders includes calculating a number of customer orders for each time period of the plurality of time periods.

15. (new) The method of claim 3 further comprising the step of determining a geographic customer area for a customer based on a delivery address associated with a customer order.

16. (new) The computer program product of claim 4 further comprising executable instructions for executing the steps of:

determining at least one second time period of the plurality of time periods having a higher level of demand than other time periods of the plurality of time periods;

imposing a surcharge to customers placing an order over the computer network and selecting the determined at least one second time period of the plurality of time periods; and

withdrawing the imposed surcharge in response to receipt of a predetermined number of customer orders selecting the determined at least second one time period being less than a second predetermined threshold.

17. (new) The computer program product of claim 4 wherein the step of monitoring demand for deliveries of customer orders includes calculating a number of customer orders for each time period of the plurality of time periods.

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18. (new) The computer program product of claim 4 further comprising executable instructions for executing the step of determining a geographic customer area for a customer based on a delivery address associated with a customer order.

19. (new) The system of claim 6 wherein the server computer further comprises:

computer instructions executable by the microprocessor for determining at least one second time period of the plurality of time periods having a lower level of demand than other time periods of the plurality of time periods;

computer instructions executable by the microprocessor for displaying an incentive on the browser and offering the incentive to customers placing an order over the computer network and selecting the determined at least one second time period of the plurality of time periods; and

computer instructions executable by the microprocessor for removing the incentive displayed by the browser and withdrawing the offered incentive in response to receipt of a predetermined number of sales orders selecting the determined at least one time period exceeding a predetermined threshold.

20. (new) The system of claim 6 wherein the computer instructions executable by the microprocessor for monitoring demand for deliveries of customer orders includes computer instructions executable by the microprocessor for calculating a number of sales orders for each time period of the plurality of time periods.

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D.) AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

None.